

**DNR Pheasant Committee Meeting**  
**11/16/17**  
**Baldwin DNR Service Center**

**Attendees:**

Mark Witecha - Chair, Jaqi Christopher, Kent Van Horn - Sponsor, James Christopoulos – NED, Dean Edlin – NHC, Michelle Carlisle – NOD, Doug Burrows – Conservation Congress, Gary Dieck – WWF, Kelly Maguire – Game Farm, Ryan Haffele – WCD, Jason Cotter – SOD, Chris Pollentier – Applied Sciences, Alex Weber – PF, Harvey Halvorsen – Guest, and Mike Soergel – Guest

**Order of Business:**

1. Committee Process
  - a. Kent gave an overview of the recent changes within Wildlife Management and the DNR regarding the strategic alignment and WM Core Work Analysis
    - i. Focused on where WM will be heading with priorities and work
  - b. Overview of the role and purpose of the committee
2. FY 16-17 Pheasant Stamp Accomplishment Overview
  - a. Review of the accomplishments from the previous stamp cycle
  - b. The amount of money spent is an estimate from managers as budget tracking is difficult at this time
  - c. Most of the money was spent on Rx Burning, brush mowing, and equipment
  - d. Most projects met their goals. The few that did not cited a lack of staffing that prevented the work from being completed.
  - e. Overall 9,617 acres were impacted
    - i. Cost \$17/acre
3. Spring Hearing Questions
  - a. One question related to pheasant hunting came through the Spring Hearing process
  - b. A proposal to extend pheasant season to February 28<sup>th</sup> to allow more access to private land after the gun deer season is closed. This would time the pheasant season to close with rabbit season.
  - c. CC Committee amended the proposal to extend the season through the end of January.
    - i. Concern over additive mortality with hunting into late winter
    - ii. Approved by executive committee and will be on Spring Hearing Questions
  - d. Concerns from DNR Pheasant Committee
    - i. May raise expectation to stock more birds for a longer period of time
    - ii. Concern over potential population impact in NW WI where strong numbers of wild birds are still present
    - iii. WI Act 63 passed to extend the season to the first weekend in January. This will go into effect for the 2018 season.
4. Member Updates
  - a. Applied Sciences
    - i. Will be changing the analysis of the spring survey slightly from a year to year comparison to a rolling 5 year average
  - b. SOD
    - i. None
  - c. WCD

- i. Good reports of bird numbers from hunters. Brood success appears to be good in the region despite wet summer.
- d. Game Farm
  - i. Positive feedback again from the number of birds being stocked
  - ii. New hatchery had a test run and everything is running good. Plan to be fully operational by Spring
  - iii. Plans for stocking 75,000 birds again next year
  - iv. Game Farm will have an Open House of the new hatchery in February
- e. Friends of Poynette Game Farm
  - i. Completed 3 LTH with 2 more to go
  - ii. Purchased a new trailer to help with LTH
  - iii. Working to collaborate with other conservation groups to expand LTH opportunities
- f. Wisconsin Wildlife Federation
  - i. None
- g. Conservation Congress
  - i. Reports from the Chippewa Valley area are all positive about the number of birds being stocked on Lake Hallie and Tom Lawin WA
- h. Pheasants Forever
  - i. R3 efforts are ramping up in the state with Marty Moses, WI State Director, taking the lead
- i. NOD
  - i. Business as usual
  - ii. Considering a proposal to trap pheasants at Crex to translocate into the Western Prairie HRA instead of using lethal control to deal with sharptail interference on leks
- j. NED
  - i. New stocking issues arising in GHRA with increased pressure
  - ii. An idea was proposed to change from a 2 pm closure on stocked properties to a noon closure to help staff complete stocking before dark.
    - 1. This would allow a safer environment for workers and allow birds more time to disperse
    - 2. This will not affect the Game Farm, but it is possible that the birds would not be able to be delivered earlier everywhere to help stock earlier in the day
    - 3. The committee does not express strong support or opposition for this proposal and they feel it would be best to gauge public sentiments through the Spring Hearing process.
- k. NHC
  - i. None
- l. Chair
  - i. Overview of the grazing PR bump initiative
  - ii. National Wild Pheasant Technical meeting in Utah
    - 1. Working on a National Pheasant Conservation Plan update
      - a. Being led by the new Nation Pheasant Coordinator
    - 2. WI Ranks #7 in the nation in total pheasant hunters at ~47,000
    - 3. WI Ranks #6 in nation for total expenditures at \$25 million

4. Developing a CHAT (Critical Habitat Assessment Tool) for pheasants
    5. Developing BMP's for translocations
  - iii. Hunter trends in small game
    1. Losing small game hunters 3X faster than other hunting categories
  - iv. Current Research
    1. South Dakota completing a neonicotinoid study on pheasants
      - a. Looking at survival and reproduction
      - b. Force fed neonic treated seeds to birds for 30 days and monitored for 14 weeks
        - i. Had no effect on pheasant survival
        - ii. Had some sublethal effects
        - iii. Early stage of research, still analyzing a lot of the data
5. Tour of Pheasant Stamp Projects
  - a. The afternoon was spent looking at completed pheasant stamp projects in St. Croix and Polk Counties
  - b. Want to keep the transparency of how the money is spent with new District allotments